

**USAID/MAURITANIA**  
**ANNUAL REPORT FY 2002**

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1611 N. Kent Street, Suite 200

Arlington, VA 22209-2111

Telephone: 703/351-4006 Ext. 106

Fax: 703/351-4039

Email: [docorder@dec.cdie.org](mailto:docorder@dec.cdie.org)

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## **Annex C: Non-presence Countries – Mauritania**

### **A. Contribution to Food Security**

In terms of addressing the three dimensions of food security - availability, access and utilization - the FFP Program in Mauritania is making great strides in the nutrition education program, which covers improved utilization of food, among other topics. This is also an area that has promise for sustainability. Once the messages pass and are incorporated into the dietary regimes and regular activities of the household, they are sustained. Results of several surveys conducted between 1993 and 2000 indicate that women enrolled in the Doulos Community MCH centers for at least 2 years showed considerable improvement in child feeding practices and better knowledge of basic nutrition than non-enrolled or newly-enrolled mothers. Such changes in knowledge and practice over time suggest the program is helping beneficiary families to more effectively utilize limited food resources, thus improving household food security. Availability of food is addressed through the provision of Title II commodities to those women and children participating in the Doulos-run MCH program.

Under the new FY 2001 - FY 2005 Mauritania Anti-poverty Program (MAP) run jointly by World Vision Mauritania and Doulos Community, increased food access is being addressed through a micro-enterprise development component. The MAP program also involves building cisterns and creating local water management committees with the goal of improving access by poor families to clean water supplies at a reduced cost. Both the micro-enterprise and water activities should lead to an increase in resources available to beneficiary families. This first year of the project has seen greater than expected impact on the income of the clients; their profits have increased by an average of 49% and their working capital by 139%. The provision of the water cisterns not only ensures that the families have a clean water source available, but also provides water at a greatly reduced price thus allowing household income to be used for other needs. Through education, World Vision and Doulos will encourage beneficiary families to use this increased in disposable income to improve the food security and nutrition of their households.

### **B. Effectiveness of the Program in Achieving Results<sup>1</sup>**

Under the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program, results achieved regarding impact indicators generally exceeded expectations as indicated below.

#### **1. Objective 1: Improve Health and Nutritional Status of Targeted Populations**

##### **1.a. Improved Health & Nutrition Status of Children Enrolled in MCH Feeding Programs**

Children graduating from Doulos' Nouakchott MCH centers in FY2001 surpassed all previous program graduates in terms of improvement in their weight-for-age (WFA) status. The 2,288 children who graduated from the program during FY2001 (Oct. 2000 – Sept. 2001) increased in weight-for-age status by an average of 24.1 percentage points over the course of program enrollment. These levels greatly exceed the average WFA gain of 15% achieved by program graduates between FY 1993 and FY 2000. The average program graduate in FY 2001 entered the MCH program at 10 months of age with a WFA status of 68.5% of the median and graduated from the MCH centers at 57 months of age with a WFA of 92.6% of the median. The most severely malnourished children (less than 60% of median WFA at enrollment) showed even more dramatic improvement, improving an average of 34.5% from 55.4% median WFA at enrollment to an average of 89.9% WFA at departure. In fact, 92% of the severely malnourished children attained a weight-for-age of at least 75% by the time of their graduation from the program.

##### **1.b. Improved Health Knowledge & Practice of Targeted Mothers**

Doulos Community primarily measures the change in knowledge, attitude and practice among enrolled beneficiary mothers by means of its large-scale KAP/KPC surveys every 2-3 years.

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<sup>1</sup> For detailed information on this section, please refer to the FY 2001 Results Report submitted by World Vision in December 2001.

Doulos' next survey is planned for the beginning of FY 2003 (Sept – Dec. 2002) and thus no targets have been established for FY 2001 and FY 2002. However, Doulos management recently received copies of preliminary reports for two other surveys which help to further demonstrate the level of improved knowledge and practice among Doulos beneficiary mothers.

### **1.c. Strengthened Local Capacity to Identify & Respond to Food Security Problems**

Doulos' "Support to Partner Agencies" component of the DAP has grown tremendously in the last five years and has become a key way in which Doulos is able to nurture local NGOs working in the field of Maternal and Child Health. In the past year, 64% of the partners whom Doulos supported were Mauritanian NGOs or other local agencies (including the Mauritanian Ministry of Health and the Mauritanian Red Crescent Society). This is the highest percentage of local partners ever supported by Doulos, 127% over the average level of Mauritanian partners over the FY 1996 – FY 2000 period and the target established for FY01 in the DAP. Back in 1996, only 33% of the partner-run MCH feeding programs supported by Doulos were Mauritanian NGOs and agencies (3 of 10 partners). The seven-fold increase in the number of Mauritanian partners Doulos now supports is a reflection of the rapid development and dynamism of the local NGO sector.

### **1.D. TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND UTILIZATION OF CLEAN WATER TO TARGETED POPULATION IN NOUAKCHOTT**

Despite the late start of the program good progress was made in the sensitization and training of communities, and the construction of cisterns. The water pipeline extensions were not started this year as the project worked with the local authorities on plans for the network. Through the sensitization the message 'Water is life' reached over 14,000 members of the community where the project plans to construct the cisterns. The message sensitized people on the importance of clean water, how to identify and store clean water and other water-related hygiene topics. Additional seminars were held specifically to target the management committees for the water cisterns on the maintenance of the cisterns, the management of the funds collected from the sale of the water to the community, and basic record keeping. Over 600 people, the majority of them women, received this training.

In preparing for the construction of the cisterns the community groups each collected enough to contribute 10% to 12% of the cost of the cistern. This is despite the cost of the cisterns increasing due to the new design that makes it easier for the community to preserve the cleanliness of the water, to clean the cistern, and to retrieve water from it. In total, six cisterns were completed by the end of the financial year with a further six under construction. The six that were completed were under the management of the community water committees and are providing water to over 6,000 people living on the areas of Arafat, Sebkha and Elmina.

### **2: Objective 2: Improved household income of targeted micro-entrepreneurs**

Upon the approval of the DAP in February 2001, the grant took charge of the existing loan fund and operational costs for AMA, a micro-finance program in the targeted zones. As AMA had been functioning prior to the DAP, it was able to immediately provide loans to clients. In nine months, 1,544 clients were provided with loans valued at \$132,000. The loan reimbursement rate for the year was 96.6%. The initial impact evaluation is positive with micro-entrepreneurs who completed a renewed loan with AMA showing an increase in the profitability of their business on average by 49%. Additionally micro-entrepreneurs who completed a loan increased their working capital on average by 139%. Each loan given by AMA allows clients the chance to increase their household income, enabling them to provide for the needs of their families and gain independence.